

February 20, 1976

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Oh, sure, go ahead.

SENATOR F. LEWIS: That is the same situation we have in terms of adequate classrooms where students aren't. If you are talking about a student at Hastings College or if you are talking about one at Crete or if you are talking about one at Fremont where there is no other institution except at a public school, certainly that is the situation and not whether or not they can afford to come to Lincoln, Nebraska. There are classrooms at Lincoln, or if someone from Fremont wanted to go to Peru, he could do that. Of course, he couldn't get a job or have a place to get the money to provide for the necessary education.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Senator Lewis. A lot of reasons are given when somebody decides to breakdown the separation between the church and the state. To Senator Schmit, I am not worried about a child's point of view being changed or modified by going to a religious institution. I am saying that the state should not provide aid and support to religious institutions. If I had a religion and the school taught my religion, it would be as inappropriate for the state to support that school as it is anybody else's. I agree that there should be a broad spectrum of professors at a school, and in the public schools, they can provide this. I would never speak against an atheist teaching at a public school, a deist, pantheist, an agnostic, a Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, a Jewish person, a Moslem, a Turk. It wouldn't make me any difference what his or her religious persuasion is. Let them teach but the public schools are established for the purpose of providing this intellectual stimulation. Taxes are raised to support a public school system, and until it can be shown that the public schools are inadequate to provide classrooms for the students, there is not even the flimsiest basis for the state giving money to these private institutions. People still go there by choice. Now when they say thine is the power in the prayer, they don't mean the person sitting up there but somebody else is going to intervene there. The issue is one of church and state and you will notice that when Senator Lewis was talking about my remarks he did not address himself to the possibility of amending his provision to say that the grants and the loans would go to students only attending nonsectarian postsecondary schools which might happen to be private and I will ask Senator Lewis that question. Senator Lewis, would you agree to an amendment like that? Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Swigart.

SENATOR SWIGART: Mr. President and colleagues, I think really we have gone too far in this bugaboo about imposing religion on anybody. I think the federal government does a pretty good job of keeping religion out of anything that they participate in and they are pretty adept of it. I even think they go a little bit